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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Shiites revolt, U.S. apologizes - Turkiye
Turkey wants buffer zone on border with Iraq - Milliyet
Turkish troops to area north of Baghdad - Milliyet
Iraqi tribal leaders to Ankara for bargaining - Sabah
Turkish Airlines to Basra - Hurriyet

OPINION MAKERS

No room for the UN in Iraq - Cumhuriyet
Israel kills Islamic Jihad leader - Yeni Safak
Schroeder: No German troops for Iraq - Yeni Safak
Taliban, Al-Qaida attacks intensify in Afghanistan -
Cumhuriyet
Saddam flirts with Shiites - Radikal
Lights go out, U.S. back to stone age - Zaman
Power outage causes panic in U.S. - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Turks for Iraq peacekeeping: Ankara has asked Washington to set up a demilitarized buffer zone between Iraq and Turkey to prevent terrorist infiltration. Ankara is considering sending 10,000 troops to be deployed to the west and northwest of Baghdad. Dailies expect Ankara to demand a share in Iraq's rebuilding. Foreign Minister Gul said on Thursday that Ankara will ask the U.S. to eliminate the threat posed by the PKK. Turkey will not go to Iraq merely for security reasons, but to extend a helping hand to the Iraqi people, Gul added. A "Cumhuriyet" report suggests that Islamic militants from Syria, Iran and Saudi Arabia are behind attacks on U.S. soldiers in the Fallujah-Tikrit-Bakuba zone. Turkey will warn these countries to prevent similar attacks against Turkish troops deployed in the region. "Milliyet" claims that Turkey and the U.S. have agreed that the Turks should be deployed in the Salahaddin-Diyala-Bakuba triangle near Tikrit. A Turkish delegation of military, intelligence and MFA officials will visit Iraq next week for talks with representatives of local ethnic groups. Another delegation of lawmakers and NGO members will go to Iraq to meet the influential Shammari tribe, "Milliyet" reports. Dailies also expect Iraqi tribal leaders to pay a visit to Ankara next week.

Turkey, Iraq ties improving: Ankara has welcomed the election of two prominent Turkomen to the 25-member Constitutional Council for a democratic Iraq, papers report. Turkey and Iraq have signed an agreement to resume civilian flights between Istanbul and Basra, and train services from Turkey to Baghdad have also resumed.

Transfers to AKP: Independent lawmaker Mustafa Zeydan and CHP's Nezir Nasiroglu formally joined the AKP on Thursday. With 368 seats in parliament, AKP now has a comfortable majority to pass constitutional amendments without support from the opposition.

Turkey in EU by 2012: A survey of 39 leading EU specialists concluded that Turkey's EU membership is unlikely before 2012. Only 40 percent of the EU experts believe that the EU will begin accession negotiations with Turkey in late 2004

or early 2005. EU experts from leading European think-tanks and financial institutions believe that religion and the Cyprus problem are the main obstacles on Turkey's path to the EU.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq

"Azeri soldiers in Iraq"

Ferai Tinc observed in mass appeal Hurriyet (8/15): "The decision of Baku to send its troops to Iraq has more significance for Ankara than Washington because of the critical ties between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Turkey and Azerbaijan collaborated in peacekeeping missions in both Bosnia and Kosovo. This time Azerbaijan acted alone, due to the lack of political sense in Ankara. . The Bush administration does not see developments in Iraq negatively. Therefore, the involvement of the UN has remained at a relatively low level. There are ongoing efforts, however, to increase the legitimacy of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). The IGC will eventually ask Ankara for help in establishing stability and peace. Yet the current picture in Ankara is confusing. Ankara has become used to pursuing a policy of avoidance - always waiting for Washington's stance before defining its position. It is a wrong-headed tactic. Now, however, we see that the same mistake is being repeated again. We don't need evasive remarks or confusing hints. We should all know in clear and direct terms under which conditions Turkey will or will not send its troops to Iraq."

"Establishing stability is not the US goal"

Serdar Turgut argued in the mass appeal-sensational Aksam (8/15): "Turkey is considering sending its troops to Iraq, as FM Gul explained, 'for the establishment of order and stability, and to help Iraqis improve their daily lives.' This is actually against the ongoing US strategy for Iraq, and Ankara's thinking has the potential to put Turkey at political risk. . The US presence in Iraq is not concerned with making daily life better for Iraqis. There is no electricity, no water, and no justice system. There are reports about 'self-declared' justice in Shiite-controlled areas. . The US strategy for Iraq is to ensure a permanent local anarchy and to institutionalize the instability. By doing that, the US hopes to manipulate the system to its benefit. . Turkey wants to be in Iraq to establish order. This does not make sense if we carefully analyze the long term objectives and regional strategy of the United States."

DEUTSCH